

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending in this application, of which Claims 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9-11 are in independent form. Claims 1-11 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention, and Claims 12-17 have been added to assure Applicant of a full measure of protection of the scope to which he deems himself entitled.

Claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from U.S. Patent 5,970,218 A (Mullin et al.) in view of U.S. Patent 5,995,723 A (Sperry et al.).

The present invention is intended to enhance the protection of secret information. In conventional systems, as described in the application, a document may have personal identification information (e.g., a particular user's password) attached to the document, such that the document will not be printed unless the password is entered by the user. In such systems, however, it is standard for the document name and user name to be displayed, and even this information may be sensitive and worth protecting from divulgence to other users.

This problem is addressed by an apparatus as recited in independent Claim 1, which is directed to a printing control apparatus for performing printing by a printing device based upon a print job to which identification information is attached. The apparatus judges whether or not a secured print (as opposed to a printing that need not be subject to security considerations) is designated. The apparatus displays an input screen on which a document name corresponding to the print job is inputted, in a case where it is judged that the secured print is designated, and sets the document name inputted using the input screen to the print job before the print job is transmitted to the printing device, such

that a third person cannot recognize an attribute of the print job, and transmits the print job to which the document name is set to the printing device so as to print the print job by the printing device. According to Claim 1, the input screen is displayed and a document name is set at every time in which the secured print is designated.

Mullin relates to a network system having workstations and printers. At a workstation, a user enters a personal identification number (PIN) associated with a private print job, and the print job and the PIN associated with the print job are sent to a printer. When the printer becomes ready to print that job, the printer sends a message to the workstation. The user walks up to the printer and manually inputs identification information to identify him or herself. The printer compares the identification obtained from the workstation with the inputted identification, and if they match, the selected print job is printed (col. 3, lines 5-19, and col. 5, lines 20-39).

According to *Mullin*, a document name is always displayed on an operation panel of the printer, so there is a possibility of that another person may recognize the document name of the print job. This is undesirable in some cases, as described in Applicant's specification.

Sperry relates to a client subsystem which is used for a network printing system. The client complies a document and uses Print Assistant to alternate an attribute of the document. According to the portions (column 8, line 54, *et seq.*, and Fig. 6) specifically cited in the Office Action, in Step 74, a print job is sent to a remote server (spooler), and the attribute of the print job is changed using a screen as shown in Fig. 6. According to *Sperry*, an attribute set to the print job is always displayed. It is, therefore, evident that

Sperry does not suggest keeping an attribute of a print job from being observed by a third person.

As described above, in contrast, in an apparatus according to Claim 1, an input screen on which a document name corresponding to the print job is inputted, is displayed, and a input document name inputted using the input screen is set to the print job before the print job is transmitted to the printing device, such that a third person *cannot* recognize an attribute of the print job at the printing device. By virtue of at least this feature, therefore, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is clearly allowable over either *Mullin* or *Sperry* taken alone or in any possible combination (assuming for argument's sake that such combination would be a permissible one).

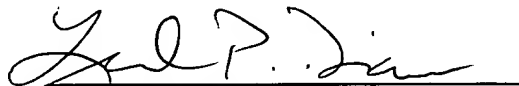
Claim 3 is a method claim corresponding to Claim 1, Claim 5 is a system claim corresponding to Claim 1, and Claim 7 is a method claim corresponding to Claim 5. Claims 9 and 10 are storage medium claims corresponding to Claims 3 and 7, respectively. Each of these independent claims, therefore, is also deemed allowable over the proposed (or any other) combination of *Mullin* and *Sperry*, for at least the reason discussed above with regard to Claim 1.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration or reconsideration, as the case may be, of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Leonard P. Diana", is written over a horizontal line.

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